

# THE COMET.

BY WALTER WILDFIRE.

HIS COURSE HE BENDS  
THRO' THE CALM FIRMAMENT ; BUT WHETHER UP OR DOWN,  
BY CENTRICK OR ECCENTRICK, HARD TO TELL.      MILTON.

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SATURDAY, DECEMBER 28, 1811.

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FROM THE MONTHLY MIRROR.

## THE WIFE.

The storm still raged, and Ellen's heart still beat with terroure.— In the pauses of the thundering elements, the raven's shrieks alone were heard, and to her startled ear they sounded like the shrieks of death. She pressed her burning forehead, and leaving the tremendous forest, rushed wildly over a drawbridge, swift as her feet would carry her. The place she entered was an ancient desolated hall, where many tattered trophies hung around, which flapped with solemn murmuring to and fro, as the winds whistled through the broken casements. She stopped for breath, and, trembling, turned her eyes to see if still the assassin followed—but all was dark. Scarce knowing how to act, she leaned against a mutilated pillar, and clung, like the ivy's tendrils, round it for support. Awhile the thunder ceased, but still the rain poured down in torrents—sinking on her kness, she addressed herself to Heaven ; but soon again the thunders rolled, and as the lightning darted round, once more she saw the ruffian whom she dreaded :—uttering a convulsive cry, which fortunately was buried in the raging of the tempest, she clung still nearer to the pillar, and scarcely dared to breathe—her eyes were fixed upon him ; at intervals the flashes made him visible—he advanced—again—still nearer—she now heard his footsteps—he was within a stride of where she lay—in suspensive agony she watched—he was opposite her, muttering some words of dark intent—another flash, more vivid than the rest, glanced o'er a dagger which he held ; it met her eye, and she sank insensible on the pavement.

When Ellen awoke to feeling, the storm fiend howled no more, the thunder's bursts where hushed, and the feeble moon appeared

attempting to break through the heavy clouds that still encompassed and almost concealed her. The hapless lady looked around, but no forbidding object met her sight. She pressed her beating heart, and tried to recollect herself, but her thoughts were all confused.—“O ! what a night have I encountered,” she exclaimed. A groan was heard in answer, and she started up—it seemed, though distant, to come from an unfortunate—another followed, and then some words, which she could not perfectly distinguish, though their import was of *murder*.—She heaved a shuddering sigh, and the warm blood iced in her veins. And now at the extremity of the hall, there beamed a glimmering light—she looked—a man, whose eyes scowled cruelty and malice from beneath his bushy eyebrows, bore it, and in the other hand he grasped a poniard.—Again she looked and beheld, oh heaven ! the wretch who had traced her through the forest, and caused her terrors—he spoke, she eagerly listened, and faintly caught these words—“The storm is over, and dost thou still tremble, Maurice ? Art thou still afraid, dastard ?”—“But to stab him,” muttered the other,—and Ellen’s brain throbbed. “And why not ?—*he sleeps*.” They paused, and gazed upon each other ; the one who bore the lamp seemed to shudder, for it trembled in his hand. “Sleeps ?” murmured he. “Aye, soundly too.”—“And in such a night as this, Irwan. Oh God ! oh God ! when shall *I* sleep ?”—“Thou fool !”—Ellen heard no more ; for they had crossed the hall, and unbarring a ponderous door, they slowly ascended some steps, which, apparently led to the upper apartments, and disappeared. Again her thoughts were chaos—“Stab him while he sleeps !” she cried, “Oh God !” A sudden thought gleamed upon her brain, and quick as her trembling legs would carry her, she followed the murderers’ track. Passing the heavy portal, she listened, but heard them not—wildly she rushed on ; the winding steps flew beneath her ; she ascended an immense height, in pitchy darkness, fearful every moment, in her haste, of dashing down some broken chasm. At length a light glimmered on the rugged stones, of which the tower (for such appeared what she was now encompassed by) was formed, and presently she beheld those whom she pursued. Slackening her pace, she breathed awhile though still keeping them in view. Seeming to have gained the height, they forced open an iron door, and entered. Regardless of her danger, (for the events of the night had followed in such quick succession)

that they had nearly unthroned her reason) she still continued on, nor stopped till she had also reached the entrance. Beyond appeared a dismal prison, and in a niche, some one stretched on straw, in slumber—no doubt the murderers' victim. Not daring to advance farther, she saw imperfectly, though understanding that their intention was to murder while he slept, she was surprised to hear Maurice, as his companion named him, awake the stranger. "Are ye then come?" in feeble accents he exclaimed. She thought she knew the sounds, but remembrance told her not whose they were. "And has the curst, the cruel Baron, then determined? what has his malice at length invented? Am I to be hurled from the casement of this tower, to dash from rock to rock, until I reach my grave—the waves that wash its base? or has he still more lingering torments for me?"—"The Baron is merciful, you may still live," cried Ellen's persecutor, but on this condition—consent to let the Baron possess your wife, the beauteous——" and Ellen herself was named.—Heavens! was it possible? could it be her idolized Edmund they were going to murder? Where was she? Who was the Baron? And how came her husband there? All passed over her thoughts, she vainly tried to recollect. "Never," cried Edmund, "never will I consent—sooner would I cherish the envenomed adder in my bosom, than see her rest on his!—sooner would I suck the poison with my lips, than see him steal a honied kiss from hers! Content!—No, no, ere my tongue utters such a word may lightnings blister it!"—"You have pronounced your doom," exclaimed the savage.—"Yet," said Edmund, "spare, oh! spare my boy, my son, my Henry?" Ellen stopt no longer—Henry! that name was madness! Her son there too! he ran, and found herself in her startled husband's arms, who pressed her fondly to him, while the big tears trickled from his eyes upon her bosom. "Tear them asunder," cried Maurice. "No, never," shrieked Ellen. "Here, here in my Edmund's heart have I lived, here will I grow, and when you pierce his breast, mine too shall bleed." "Irwan, what must be done?" asked Maurice. "There is no time to consider," replied Irwan, "our deeds must be instantaneous—*this, this,*" continued he, "shall effect it."—Ellen gazed, and saw her child in the fell monster's gripe—her head whirled round, and madness raged within. The casement was thrown open, and the waves, swelled by the late storm, were heard in hollow, chilling sounds, to dash against the tower. Already had Ir-



wan raised the boy, who, crying, stretched his little arms for safety to his mother.—Already he appeared to cast him from him, when, regardless of every other tie, she darted from her husband's side, and snatched her Henry from his threatened death, and sinking with him to the ground, was raising her eyes towards her God, when they encountered Maurice, who at that moment plunged a dagger in her husband's heart ! Uttering a dreadful piercing shriek, she—*awoke*—finding herself encircled in her beloved Edmund's arms, while her sweet boy lay calmly slumbering by her. Her joy was unutterable—imprinting a kiss upon his rosy cheek, and enfolding her husband still closer to her heart, she breathed a silent grateful prayer to heaven, that 'twas but a—*Dream*.

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### LOVE.

Love is the noblest passion of the human breast. It commands the best affections of the heart, while it affords to the soul most admirable movements. It is a passion, which affects both the noble and the cottager, for no rank in life is exempt from its divine influence.

Love, however, has different natures ; yet every variation is most pleasing to the mind. The affection we feel for the Author of every good, the Being who supplies our wants, has a commanding influence in our breast. The love we bear our relatives and friends is of the most gratifying nature, since it is the source of many blessings, which we enjoy through social intercourse. But the passion which actuates persons of opposite sexes is the most pleasing, as well as the most violent ; when this affection is pure and disinterested, when it actuates the soul of him who can comprehend all its finer gradations, it commands implicit homage. No object is left unaccomplished to gratify the person beloved, and by these means sincerity of either love or friendship is put to the test. When two persons of congenial dispositions are perfectly united in their hearts, life's blessings are more highly prized, but each blessing would lose its chief zest, did it not gratify both persons nearly in the same degree.

To possess the affection of a virtuous and accomplished woman is the greatest pleasure which man can experience in this world. How exquisite are the sensations, which it produces in the heart ?

How blissful are the emotions, which then agitate the breast ! The feelings are indeed divine, for they elevate their possessor to the highest pinnacle of earthly happiness.

“ Love is strong as death,” and many are the instances where it ceases only in the grave. In the days of youth, the flower is sometimes transitory, and quickly subsides ; but the emotions are more ardent than in persons of advanced life. When the frame is perfectly formed ; when each part is complete, and their connection gives consistency to the whole ; when the mind is fully matured, then do the fine feelings of the heart assume their noblest appearance ; love, when produced by a worthy object, then obtains its most settled, and most estimable character ; it is a fixed passion, and commands the destiny of him whom it actuates ; the communication with the beloved object is but a prelude to more happy hours ; and when the laws have united the congenial hearts, their connection is fraught with the most exquisite blessings ; the uncontrolled association of their fortunes give them inseparable interests ; their cares are lessened by mutual alleviation, while their happiness is increased by its being mutual.

In the decline of life, the affectionate pair reflect on the preceding years with a mixture of pride and pleasure. While they look back with these emotions, they view the course they have to take without regret, and the only thought which gives them a fleeting pain is, that death will probably soon call one of them to the tomb. Yet even then their union loses not its zest, and while they slowly glide along the vale of years, they enjoy the reflection, that, when separated in this world, they shall soon be reunited in one far better, where the wicked cease from troubling, and the weary are at rest.

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FOR THE COMET.

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## THEATRICAL RECORDER.

No. X.

Dec. 20. *Bunker Hill—Musick mad—High Life below Stairs.*

“ Bunker Hill, or the Death of General Warren, an Historick Tragedy in five acts,” written by John Burk, was first performed in Boston we believe in the winter of 1796,—’97. The author was an Irishman, compelled to leave his country to escape the pun-

ishment due to a violator of its laws. After his arrival in Boston, he edited for a short period a daily paper, entitled "The Polar Star." From Boston he went to New-York, and thence, progressing southward, arrived in Virginia, where, some years ago, he was killed in a duel.

The tragedy of Bunker Hill is said to have been written on his passage from Ireland to Boston. On its first performance it had a run of several nights, owing more to the interest felt by the publick in the event on which it professes to be founded, than to any intrinsic merits it could have been supposed to possess. The Battle of Bunker Hill was an event important in its consequences both to England and America ; and a dramattick piece bearing so imposing a title, could not fail to draw the attention of the publick. The name of General Warren too, a soldier, a patriot, and a philanthropist, was dear to every American. It was undoubtedly from these causes that the play was ever attractive ; for considered simply as a literary performance it is trifling and contemptible. It is also well known that the character of *Warren*, the only personage in the piece which has any distinctness of character, is drawn by the poet as quite the reverse of *Warren*, the hero and the martyr of Bunker Hill. Our patriot Warren was a man of uncommonly strong sensibilities, and possessed a zeal which blazed in the cause of Liberty. "He was candid, generous, and ready to do kind offices to those who differed from him in political sentiments." Not so the Warren of Mr. Burk. He has zeal it is true ; but it is such as a savage feels when roused by the song of war. What American can hear his invocation, "Now savage strife and fury fill my soul," &c. in the fourth act, and acknowledge him his countryman ! We should have more cause for regret, were it probable that posterity would estimate the character of our lamented hero, by the portrait of Mr. Burk : but that will never be the case ; this tragedy peacefully slumbered for several years previous to its present revival, and will doubtless soon descend with the name of its author to undisturbed oblivion. But

" Where, hapless WARREN, thy cold earth is seen,  
There springs thy laurel in immortal green.  
Dearest of Chiefs, that ever press'd the plain,  
In freedom's cause with early honours slain ;  
Still dear in death, as when in fight you mov'd,  
By hosts applauded, and by Heaven approv'd,

The faithful Muse shall tell the world thy fame,  
And unborn realms resound th' immortal name."\*

As this play so seldom visits "the glimpses of the moon," perhaps a few of its poetical beauties will not be unpleasant to the reader. It opens with *Governour Gage* meeting *Lord Percy* and a party of English soldiers, as just returned from the battle at Lexington. After *Gage* has enquired the cause of "the rout," and made his reflexions thereon,—

"*Lord Percy.* Your excellency has not yet enquired  
"What loss our troops sustain'd at Lexington.  
"*Gov. Gage.* Ay very true ; my mind was so engaged  
"With doubts and apprehensions, I forgot it.  
"Have you yet muster'd them ?  
"*Lord Percy.* I have my lord :  
"And I am griev'd to tell you that one half  
"Of Colonel Smith's detachment is cut off."

After some further reflections, (his Governourship seems to be a great moralizer) enter an officer in haste.

"*Officer.* May it please your excellency—  
"*Gov. Gage.* What tidings do you bear ?  
"*Officer.* As on the isthmus we patrol'd the lines,  
"According to your excellency's order,  
"A cloud of dust approaching to the town,  
"Darken'd the air—instant we sent scouts,  
"Who breathless with affright and haste return'd  
"With information that the foe was near,  
"And hither bent their course.  
"*Lord Percy.* I told your excellency it would be so !"

There are some very passionate love-scenes between *Abercrombie*, an English soldier, and *Elvira*, whose

"Father in the Carolinas lives,  
"A wealthy man, and high in reputation."

*Elvira* tries to persuade her lover to desert and retire with her,  
"And leave the noisy paths of busy life"—

*Abercrombie* says, "this savours of a tail," and thinks it more honourable to remain at his post. *Elvira*, however does not let him go so easy, but sends "her faithful *Anna*" with a letter. On *Anna's* return she questions her,—

O did you see him ?  
"*Anna.* I did, my lady.

\* Barlow.



" *Elvira*. And into his own hands my letter give ?

" What said he ? did he read it ?

" *Anna*. Alarm fills the town, and the hoarse note

" Of warlike preparation peals around ;

" The British troops are sent to storm the post,

" Of Bunker Hill ; I saw them all embark

" And steer towards it.

" *Elvira*. O misery !"

After the battle, in which *Abercrombie* falls, the lady goes in search of him ; her maid says she has lost her senses ; having found her lover's body, she faints on it, exclaiming,

" Oh *Abercrombie*, love, sweet love, dear love !"

*Lord Percy* is a very knowing one. *Sir W. Howe* says,

" This is defeat ;

" And will be construed so in England.

" Who would have thought the rebels would have dared

" To fire on us ?

" *Lord Percy*. I knew they would."

After *Warren* has detailed to *Generals Putnam* and *Prescott* his plan to succour Boston, *Putnam* says,

" The project is most excellent,

" And suits exactly with our present circumstances.

" *Prescott*. One thing alone is wanting to ensure

" Success to it.

" *Warren*. What is that ?

" *Prescott*. That general *Warren* should command the troops

" Sent on this service.

" *Warren*. If that be it, there is no want at all."

Who ever accepted a commission more gracefully, or in fewer words ?

The reader has probably by this time had enough of the beauties of *Mr. Burk*, and expects us to tell him something of the performance of the tragedy—in this he will be disappointed, for we have nothing to say about it, except that *Mr. Morse* played the character of *General Warren*, agreeably to the sense of his author ; and was loudly applauded by an overflowing pit. The play, with all its nonsense, " filled a pit as well as another." This the managers probably foreknew, without possessing *Lord Percy's* second sight.

*Musick Mad* is a petit piece in one act, by *Theodore J. Hook*, author of *Tekeli* and some other dramattick pieces. The plot con-



sists in nothing more than *Sir Christopher Crotch*, who is musick mad, advertising, that he has deceased, and bequeathed 30,000*l.* to the most unfortunate of his relations. After various applications from a Frenchman whose wife has eloped, a musick master who has run away with her, and others, he gives the sum to a sailor, whom he considers the most unfortunate, because he understands nothing of musick.

*Sir Christopher*, Mr. Dickenson, and his servant *Matthew*, Mr. Entwisle, kept the house in a continual roar of laughter. A duet in which *Sir Christopher* attempts to teach his servant to sing, excited loud applause ; as did also a song by *Sir Christopher*, in which are introduced characteristick melodies of various countries, and ending with the chorus to "*Adams and Liberty*."

Much of the wit of the piece consists in the ludicrous application of musical terms. The musick is delightful ; the finale is set to the favourite air of *Tekeli*, in which Mr. Entwisle brings in a verse from Collins's Ode on the Passions, with laughable effect. The whole is a pleasant entertainment and deserves to be successful.

Dec. 23. *Tamerlane—The Forty Thieves.*

The tragedy of *Tamerlane* was first produced in 1702 ; and, as Dr. Johnson informs us, was the tragedy which its author, Nicholas Rowe, valued more than any of his other dramattick works. The cause of this partiality it is not now easy to discover ; nor is it perhaps of much consequence to be known. Posterity have decided that it is inferiour in many respects to his *Fair Penitent*, and that his *Jane Shore* is superiour to either. *Tamerlane* is not often represented on the American stage, and still less is it exhibited on the English. The causes which are said to have once made it popular are now forgotten ; and it does not possess sufficient interest to attract a numerous audience.

The general characteristicks of Rowe's tragedy, are "elegance of diction and suavity of verse. He seldom moves either pity or terroure, but he often elevates the sentiments. He seldom pierces the breast ; but he always delights the ear, and often improves the understanding." This character, which Dr. Johnson has given to Rowe's plays generally, applies particularly to that now under consideration. The audience listen to *Tamerlane* with much the same sensations as they would to any other didactick speaker ; charmed

with the elegance of his language and the refinement of his precepts ; but feel no interest in his fate, whatever it may be. It is the sentiment he utters that they applaud ; of the character of the man little or nothing is known. *Bajazet* is a character by no means probable ; nay it is hardly possible that such savage ferocity can exist in human beings. The lovers are more natural characters ; and the distresses of *Moneses* and *Arpasia* are affecting ; both sometimes excite pity and always demand respect. *Selima* and *Axalla* are entitled to esteem ; the one for her filial piety, and the other for heroick fortitude ; but their mutual affection is somewhat childish and insipid.

The part of *Tamerlane* was this evening assigned to Mr. Drake. Whatever might the merits of his performance, (and none are more ready than ourselves to confess that it possessed merit,) they were obscured by imperfection in the dialogue. Mr. Drake seems to be averse to the drudgery of studying his parts—"what's the use of the prompter?"—Apart from this defect (which, by the way, is not a defect peculiar to Mr. Drake alone) his *Tamerlane* was worthy of more applause than it received. We do not recollect a single instance of misplaced emphasis or misconception of the sense of the dialogue. But we remember many, in which the sentiment was delivered with graceful and appropriate gesture, and tones and inflexions of voice, that corresponded with the meaning. Amongst others was the following :

You dress me

Like an usurper, in the borrowed attributes  
Of injured Heaven. Can we call conquest ours ?  
Shall man, this pigmy, with a giant's pride  
Vaunt of himself, and say, " Thus have I done this ?"  
Oh, vain pretence to greatness ; Like the moon  
We borrow all the brightness which we boast,  
Dark in ourselves, and useless. If that hand,  
That rules the fate of battles, strike for us,  
'Twere most ungrateful to disown the benefit,  
And arrogate a praise which is not ours.

And this, spoken to the *Dervise* :—

No law divine condemns the virtuous,  
For differing from the rules your schools devise.  
Look round, how Providence bestows alike  
Sunshine and rain to bless the fruitful year,  
On different nations, &c.

The whole scene with the *Dervise*, and that in the tent with *Arpasia* and *Bajazet* were judicious and animated.

With Mr. Morse's *Bajazet* we confess ourselves disappointed. It has been said that Rowe drew this character for Lewis the fourteenth, and threw into it all that was repugnant to virtue and humanity, to make it appear detestable ; but we have never heard that he wished or expected his painting to be laughed at. The pit and the gallery kept up an incessant laugh, which Mr. Morse we trust has too much good sense to mistake for applause. His scene in the tent, where he discovered *Tamerlane* with *Arpasia* was by far the best part of his performance. As a proof of it, there was greater silence in the house during its representation.

### THE INTRODUCTION OF DEATH INTO THE WORLD.

*According to the popular belief of the Marda Garooes, or Natives of  
Hurryhurr, in the East Indies.*

*From the Journal of Major Mackenzie.*

When the casts of Brahmans had increased and multiplied very much, the people being immortal, and death not yet having come into this terrestrial world, the goddess of the earth, Bhooda-vee, was so overloaded with the multitude, that she complained and entreated Brahma to relieve her from this trouble ; then, with consent of Veshnu and Siva, he created the goddess of death, Moorte Davata, and ordered her to subject mankind to death. But she was offended at being created for such a purpose, considering the office allotted to her inconsistent with her high birth, and represented to Brahma that she did not like to undertake this melancholy duty, which he had assigned her, as she would be represented by man, as the cause of their evil and death ; and she immediately took flight towards the mountains of the north, where for many years she devoted herself to worship God to avert the office allotted to her. Then Brahma appeared to her, and collecting all the sad tears shed in her lamentations, he divided the stock into the three hundred and sixty maladies and diseases to which the human frame is liable, and comforted her that no one could now accuse her as the *immediate* cause of death, since it would be imputed to disease and sickness by the friends of the dead ; and, therefore,

she could take possession of her allotted office for the relief of the earth. He then sent the goddess, following this train of diseases, into the world, and from that period mankind became subject to all kinds of sickness and death.

### OPINIONS OF MONSIEUR SORBIERE.

BORN IN FRANCE, 1610.

#### ATHEISTS.

There are three kinds of atheists ; persons of subtle understandings, men of profligate principles, and ignorant pretenders to thinking. The two latter are generally converted by misfortunes, or by the approach of death, the great touchstone of the soul. As to the former, it is impossible for me to imagine how they can, as men of knowledge, reject so many evidences of the first cause.

#### ROMANCES.

Methinks when I grow old, I shall prefer romances to history, if I continue to have the same esteem for truth that I now possess. I see no truth to oppose what they relate ; whilst history is full of obscurities, defects, and contradictions. In the latter, the truth of a fact remains in some degree opposed by historical narration ; but with regard to the falsehood of a fabulous story, there is no matter of fact to stand against the narration, so is there no fear of another falsehood to destroy the former one. Both being mutually friends, they support to the utmost whatever shadow of substance they may reciprocally possess.

#### TRICKS.

Simple people look upon the sleight-of-hand tricks of jugglers as performed by an interference of an evil spirit, and cannot think them to be the effects of a nimble wrist. When I was young, and saw men dance on the tight rope, I thought they were in covenant with the devil ; and I believe most of my female acquaintance were of the same opinion. It is natural for us to dogmatize, and ignorance is never given to doubts. One is more ready to give a foolish reason for a thing than to acknowledge that we cannot give any. The devil is therefore called in to explain causes, which we cannot do ourselves. Men of sense indeed are ashamed to produce reasons for things when they think them foolish ones, and dare own their



ignorance. I fear these simple folks, who judge of jugglers, are imitated by some philosophers, who presume to explain the causes of natural phenomena, by calling in the aid of metaphysicks.

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WRITTEN IN A BLANK LEAF OF CAMPBELL'S  
PLEASURES OF HOPE.

How hard the slave's imperious lot  
Forc'd from his home, his parents' cot ;  
To other climes his course he steers,  
And tho' with eyes bedew'd with tears,  
Borne on his voyage with speedy sail,  
He weeps his grief o'erburthen'd tale,  
Yet pleasures still his thoughts illume,  
Thy prospects, *Hope*, avert the gloom.

The hardy seaman ploughs the wave,  
Nor fears to meet a watry grave ;  
While dangers on his voyage attend,  
He trusts in *Hope*, his early friend ;  
Tho' storms arise and lightnings glare,  
And peals of thunder rend the air,  
His manly soul can front them all,  
Inspir'd by *Hope*, he braves them all.

The lover, doom'd by fate to part  
From her who holds his willing heart,  
And drooping takes the farewell kiss,  
Feels all the luxuries of bliss ;  
For less reserv'd the maid appears,  
In pity views his sighs and tears ;  
And silken *Hope* unto him shows,  
Th' approaching end of all his woes.

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SPIRIT OF FOREIGN JOURNALS.

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TIM SHALLOWPATE.

• Tim Shallowpate, a roving youth,  
Of ev'ry virtue was possest,

Excepting honour, faith and truth,  
 Religion, candour, and the rest.  
 Tim, (tho' a valetudinarian,)  
 Like many a fool,  
 Of fashion's school,  
 Would swear, and bluster, scold and fight,  
 No matter whether wrong or right ;  
 But in a book,  
 Would seldom deign to look ;  
 So being but a bad grammarian,  
 Would often cry,  
 " Study will never do for *I* ;  
 " I read, indeed ! no, sure 'tis *much more betterer*,  
 " To game, and drink, and laugh, intrigue, *et cetera*."

A friend oft ventur'd to reprove,  
 But vain was all his kind advice,  
 His shallow head, or callous heart to move,  
 Intemp'rate pleasures still the youth entice.  
 At length he cried, " My counsel I give o'er ;  
 " Soon, thou unthinking youth,  
 " Deaf to the voice of truth,  
 " Wilt thou thy guilty course deplore,  
 " If thus thou still continuest to behave,  
 " Like one who nought for filial duty cares,  
 " Thou wilt with sorrow hasten to the grave  
 " Thy tender sire's grey hairs."  
 " A fool !" thought Tim,  
 " What are my father's hairs to him ?"  
 Then turning sharp, he cried, with valour big,  
 " You lie ! that's flat—  
 " I fear not that,  
 " Old Greybeard, know, *my* father wears a wig."

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### THE POOR POET.

FROM THE GERMAN OF BURGER.

A Bard, more fat than bard beseem'd,  
 With face that like a full moon gleam'd,

Bewail'd the luckless fate of rhymes,  
 And stoutly rav'd against the times.  
 You're not in earnest, surely friend,—  
 Cried one that heard him to an end—  
 Your case would hardly seem so bad ;  
 'That belly many a bit has had ;  
 And for that jolly full moon face—  
 " Ah sir, if you but knew my case,"  
 Rejoin'd the bard, " this belly now,  
 " Is not like starving I avow,  
 " But let me whisper in your ear,  
 " I owe it to the landlord here,  
 " Whose bill stands over now a year."

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The following Epitaph is to be seen in the church yard of Prestbury—It has all the requisites of a good one ; it includes the name, rank, and qualifications of the person, principal events of his life, and the cause and manner of his death, in six lines :—

Beneath this stone lies Edward Green,  
 Who for cutting stone famous was seen,  
 But he was sent to apprehend  
 One Joseph Clark of Kerridge-End,  
 For stealing deer of Squire Downes,  
 Whence he was shot and died o' the wounds.

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THE KISS, is the name of a comedy performed at the Lyceum. It must be acknowledged that it is a very taking title, and whatever may be the fate of the comedy, the subject which gives name to it will never be out of fashion.

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Since the introduction of *comet trains* as an article of dress, our fair country women look more *heavenly* than ever.

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A fellow being ordered to be publicly whipped, addressed the judge—" My Lord, I'll submit to the punishment, if you insist on it ; but *I don't like it*—I might be a good scholar now if I had been fond of that amusement at school."

A medical gentleman the other day observing a lady in a very ill state of health, stepping out of a post chaise, where a servant was scouring the door-way, politely assisted her, saying, "Allow me, madam, to prevent your *kicking the bucket*."

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THE HEAD ACHE.

As a vain would-be scholar sat with his head pendant  
 And complain'd of a terrible pain in his poll,  
 "The head-ache," says he, "is on genius attendant,  
 "And seldom or ever harasses a fool."  
 "If what you aver," says one present, "be true,  
 "'Tis a wonder the head-ache should pitch upon you."

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EPITAPH ON JOHN BROWN.

Jack Brown, who lies here, was a swimming one day,  
 And Death, as it happened, was angling that way;  
 The poor fellow was hook'd, and caught up in a crack;  
 He little thought Death was fishing for Jack.

ON READING THE ABOVE.

"Since Death has turn'd angler," says Andrew to Jim,  
 "I'll go no more in the water to swim."  
 Quoth Jim to Andrew, "This is all very fine,  
 "But you know Death can fish on shore with a line."

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EPITAPH ON A REPENTANT OLD SINNER.

At length I'm fairly "cabin'd in,"  
 Yet sly and cautious ere I went hence,  
 I rubb'd off sixty years of sin,  
 By sixty minutes of repentance,  
 Thy almshouse glories, Bancroft, hide,  
 Nor boast alone thy proud achievings;  
 Like thee I sinn'd, and when I died,  
 I gave to God—the devil's leavings.



# THE COMET.

BY WALTER WILDFIRE.

HIS COURSE HE BENDS  
THRO' THE CALM FIRMAMENT ; BUT WHETHER UP OR DOWN,  
BY CENTRICK OR ECCENTRICK, HARD TO TELL. MILTON.

No. XII.

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SATURDAY, JANUARY 4, 1812.

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## SELECT REVIEW.

*Liber Facietiarum : being a Collection of curious and interesting Anecdotes.*  
Boston published by C. Williams.

The following review of this work, and the selections from it, are taken from an English Review, published in 1809, at the time the book first appeared. We feel no hesitation in selecting it for our paper, well knowing that the authority of a foreign critick will have more weight with the majority of readers than any recommendation of ours.

“ The antiquity of collections of this nature, from the *memorabilia* downwards, is well known, and the appearance of them always welcomed, by the busy as well as the idle. To read bon mots, as Johnson would say, “ the busy can find time, and the idle patience.” To this general recommendation, we may add our concurrence in the particular one, which the compiler has expressed in these words :

“ The present volume has certain claims, however, above the common works of this nature. Its materials have been drawn from a great variety of respectable sources ; and much caution has been used not to introduce anecdotes common to every collection, or otherwise grown vulgar by repetition.”

Some selections will most agreeably describe the constitution of the volume.

“ When the Fanaticks in the year 1567, came to pull down the cathedral of Glasgow, a gardener who stood by, said—‘ My friends, cannot you make it a house for serving your God in your own way ?

for it would cost your country a great deal to build such another.' The Fanaticks desisted, and it is the only cathedral in Scotland that remains entire and fit for service. *Earl of Buchan's Life of And. Fletcher.*"

"A copy of the original letter containing the order issued at the Reformation, as given in Stat. Acc. of Dunkeld.

" 'To our traist friendis the lairds of Arntilly and Kinvaid.

" 'Traist frendis, after the maist harty commendacion, we pray you fail not to pass incontinent to the kirk of Dunkeld, and tak down the hail images thereof, and bring forth to the kirk-zyard, and burn thaym openly. And sicklyk cast down the alteris, and purge the kirk of all kynd of monuments of idolatyre. And this ze fail not to do, as ze will do us singular empleseur ; and so comitis you to the protection of God.

From Edinburgh, the xii. of August, 1560.

' Signed

AR. ARGYLL.

JAMES STEWART.

RUTHVEN.'

" 'Fail not, but ze tak guid heyd that neither the dasks, windocks, nor durris, be ony ways hurt or broken,—either glassin wark or iron wark.' "

"King William III. was passionately fond of hunting ; and he made it a point of honour never to be outdone in any leap, however perilous. A certain Mr. Cherry, who was devoted to the exiled family, took occasion of this, to form perhaps the most pardonable design which was ever laid against a king's life. He regularly joined the royal hounds, put himself foremost, and took the most desperate leaps, in the hope that William might break his neck in following him. One day, however, he accomplished one so imminently dangerous, that the king, when he came to the spot, shook his head and drew back." *Universal Magazine.*

"On the 2d of September, 1792, when republican assassins were butchering the prisoners at the prison called La Force, the national deputy, Reboul, observed David calmly drawing a picture of the dying ; as they were heaped up on the pile of the already murdered : when asked what he was doing there, he answered, with sang froid, '*I am catching the last emotion of nature in those scoundrels.*' "

"In 1559, people of all ranks were married at the church-door. When Elizabeth of France, daughter of Henry I. married Philip the II. king of Spain, Eustache de Bellay, bishop of Paris, performed the celebration of the nuptials, at the church-door of Notre-Dame. Apparently it was then thought indecent to grant permission in the church itself, for a man and woman to go to bed together."

"We are informed, that the original of the following curious note is still in the possession of Dr. Wolcot :

" ' I promise to paint, for Dr. Wolcot, any picture or pictures he may demand, as long as I live ; otherwise I desire the world will consider me as a d—d ungrateful son of a b—h.

JOHN OPIE.' "

"Eve, say the Rabbins, is derived from a word which signifies to prattle. The first woman took this name for the following reason :—

"When God had created the world, he threw down from heaven twelve baskets filled with prattle ; the woman picked up nine of them whilst her husband had hardly time to collect the other three. *Segur on Women.*"

"Doctor Mead had his rise in life, from being called to see the duchess of—— at midnight. She unfortunately drank to excess,—the doctor also was very much in liquor, and was so that night. In the act of feeling her pulse, slipping his foot, he cried, ' Drunk, by G--d,' meaning himself. She, imagining he had found out her complaint, which she wished to conceal, told the doctor, if he kept it secret, she would recommend him. She did so, and made his fortune. *MS.*"

"Lord Evelyn Stuart, son of the Earl of Bute, and an officer of the guards, wore long mustaches, and appeared thus in the house of commons, of which he was a member. One day Mr. C——y thus addressed him : ' My lord, now the war is over, won't you put your mustaches on the *peace establishment* ? ' ' I do not exactly know whether I shall do that,' replied his lordship, ' but meanwhile, I would advise you to put your tongue on the *civil list*.' The commons were at this time debating on the payment of the civil list."



“ An English penny placed out at compound interest, at the rate of five per cent. at the birth of Jesus Christ, would, in the year 1786, have produced the enormous sum of 290,991,000000,000000, 000000,000000,000000/. sterling : which would make about 110 millions of our earth into solid gold. At single interest, it would have produced only 7s. 6d. !”

“ Inured to hardships, to dangers, and to a perpetual change of companions, the seaman contracts a species of stoicism which might raise the envy of Diogenes. ‘ Avast there !’ cried a sailor to his comrade, who was busied in throwing overboard the lower division of a messmate, just cut in halves by a chain-shot ; ‘ avast ! let us first see if he have not got the key of our mess-chest in his pocket.’ ”

“ The name of God has been oddly misapplied. I have got a warming-pan that belonged to Charles II. and was probably used for the beds of his mistress. It is inscribed, *Serve God and live for ever. Walpoliana.*”

“ Definition of a husband by his wife.—This lady composed the following vocabulary to express the character of a husband, from her own experience, and which proves how copious our language is on that article :—He is, said she, an abhorred, abominable, acrimonious, angry, arrogant, austere, awkward, barbarous, bitter, blustering, boisterous, boorish, brawling, brutal, bullying, capricious, captious, careless, cholerick, churlish, clamorous, contemptuous, crabbed, cross, curish, detestable, disagreeable, discontented, disgusting, dismal, dreadful, drowsy, dry, dull, envious, execrable, fastidious, fierce, fretful, froward, frumpish, furious, grating, gross, growling, gruff, grumbling hard-hearted, hasty, hateful, hectoring, horrid, huffish, humoursome, illiberal, ill-natured, implacable, inattentive, incorrigible, inflexible, injurious, insolent, intractable, irascible, ireful, jealous, keen, loathsome, maggoty, malevolent, malicious, malignant, maundering, mischievous, morose, murmuring, nauseous, nefarious, negligent, noisy, obstinate, obstreperous, odious, offensive, opinionated, oppressive, outrageous, overbearing, passionate, peevish, perversive, perverse, perplexing, pettish, petulant, plaguy, quarrelsome, queasy, queer, raging, restless, rigid, rigorous, roaring, rough, rude, rugged, suacy, savage, severe, sharp, shocking, sluggish, snappish, snarling, sneaking, sour, spiteful, splenetick, squeamish, stern stubborn, stupid, sulky,



suspicious, tantalizing, tart, teasing, terrible, testy, tiresome, tormenting, touchy, treacherous, troublesome, turbulent, tyrannic, uncomfortable, ungovernable, unpleasant, unsuitable, uppish, vexatious, violent, virulent, waspish, worrying, wrangling wrathful, yarring, yelping, dog in a manger, who neither eats himself, nor will let others eat."

"In all wars, it is usual for the contending powers to offer up prayers to heaven for their own success and the overthrow of their enemies, each party frequently adding, 'According to the *justness of our cause*, O Lord, help us, &c.' Now, considering that the cause of *both parties* cannot be *precisely* just, it would perhaps be quite as judicious, and certainly more sincere, as well as modest, to adopt the language or at least the spirit of an old Scotch woman who was a sutler in the Duke of Marlborough's army. It so happened, that this faithful follower of the camp was on one evening talking to venerable sister of the same profession, but not of the same country, on the probable consequences of an engagement expected to be fought between the two armies next morning. 'Well,' said the English sutler, 'Well—it will most certainly be a most bloody battle; and all I have to say, is, *May God stand by the right!*' 'De'el pick out your eyne for your wacked wish,' replied the Scotch one, 'God stand by Hamilton's regiment, *reight* or *wrang.*' "

"An Irish blockhead was once asked what age he was: 'I am only twenty-six,' he answered, 'but I ought to be twenty-seven, for my mother miscarried the year before I was born.' *Dutensiana.*"

"'You are always yawning,' said a woman to her husband. 'My dear friend,' replied he, 'the husband and wife are one, and when I am alone I grow weary.' "

"It is a wise provision in nature, that tall men should love little women, and that little men should love tall women. It is this that prevents the world from being filled with dwarfs and giants. *Dr. Hunter's Men and Manners.*"

"The Virgin Mary of Atocha is made of wood, yet is seen melting into tears at the pathetick parts of a sermon annually preached before her every Good Friday. On such occasions, the spectators cannot help sharing in the bitterness of the virgin's sorrow. One

day, the preacher, having exerted all his powers of oratory with the usual effect, perceived among his crying congregation a carpenter, who looked on with a dry eye. 'Impious wretch!' exclaimed the sacred orator, 'what—not weep!—not discover the smallest emotion, when you see the holy virgin herself dissolved in tears!'—'Ah, reverend father,' replied the carpenter, 'it was I, who fixed that statue yesterday in its niche: in order to fasten the virgin properly, I was obliged to drive three great nails in her backside: 'twas then she would have cried, had she been able.' *Light reading at Leisure Hours.*"

"An eunuch of infamous character had caused the following inscription to be written above his door: 'Let nothing bad enter this door.' 'And where,' said Diogenes, 'shall the master of the house enter?' "

"A West-Indian, who had a remarkably *fiery nose*, having fallen asleep in his chair, a negro boy who was in waiting, observed a musquito hovering round his face. *Quasbi* eyed the insect very attentively; at last he saw him alight on his master's nose, and immediately fly off. 'Ah, d—n you heart,' exclaimed the negro 'me d—n glad see you *burn you foot.*' "

If this taste of the these comfits and sweetmeats of literature be not enough, a fuller "*trial will better publish their commendation.*"

### ON THE INFLUENCE OF COMPANY.

*Alas! that man will wantonly o'erleap  
Those bounds which prompting reason bid him keep.*

As the society, which one part of mankind has with the other, is among the principal enjoyments of life, when founded upon a proper basis, and one of the most efficacious remedies in removing that sense of anxiety arising from those innumerable troubles and perplexities, which continually spring up in our way, that we may reap its advantages in its fullest extent, and avoid those evils, which too frequently attend intimacies formed without due previous consideration, it is necessary, when our acquaintance with others is established, that particular regard should be paid to the study of their disposition, observing in what manner it generally breaks out upon unexpected occurrences, and which way it naturally tends

when left entirely to its own direction ; for, without this observation, it is possible we may contract it with those, of whom we have formed a very erroneous opinion.

If a man of virtue should persist in keeping bad company, and place in himself a confidence, which he thought sufficient to prevent his being influenced by their example, as far as it should be incompatible with virtue, he would find that he gave himself credit for a greater share of self-command, than often falls to the lot of any ; for what might at first shock, would lose half of its force on the repetition ; and, it is one of the properties of vice, that if it does not succeed in making a victim from the first appearance it might assume, it can resort to others in a thousand different shapes, and aim a conquest at some unguarded breach ; and so prone are we to encourage its attacks, that it very often meets with aid from ourselves, especially when it flatters any predominant passion, and seldom fails of success whenever a person throws himself in the way of temptation from it.

A man in this instance, may be compared with a stream of pure water running into a larger bulk, which has lost its wholesome properties ; the smaller body has no effect in purifying the larger, but immediately imbibes itself all its nauseous qualities, and becomes equally as foul. His mind would naturally at first feel alarmed at having such images presented to it as he had hitherto made it a principle to discourage ; but, from an inclination on his own part to avoid appearing singular, he would relax a little from his austerity, and assume that outwardly, which his heart would revolt at as proceeding from principle. But, whenever this compromise is made between his heart and external appearance, the victory is decidedly in favour of his adversaries, especially if ridicule is added to persuasion ; for very often has that effected what argument could not, and a man been railed into compliance with an act when he remained inflexible to every other consideration : and he need not be surprised at any means that may be resorted to, when he considers who are the persons that employ them, and from what motive they are actuated. His instability in this case creates a perpetual spring, which employs its influence in drawing him from his duty ; and whenever it gains an ascendancy, by that which opposes it giving way, it will maintain it, and always keep its strength closely applied, until it has subdued all resistance, and returns to its natural bent without any virtuous pas-



sion rising strong enough to break its force. Thus, when he suffers temptation to preponderate over that sense of virtue which ought to be his law, he will find the former gain additional influence as the other loses it, and when the scale is once turned in its favour, it requires a greater effort to check and stop its progress than he, who has brought himself into this situation, can easily summon to his assistance.

As therefore a man naturally copies the habits, and falls into the same opinion as those with whom he is continually in company, let their peculiarities be what they may, it becomes a serious misfortune to him if that company is not virtuous, and the effects that result are dreadful : for, whatever resolution he might previously have made to preserve himself uncontaminated with their vices at the same time that he enjoyed their society, his inclination to sustain this distinction between himself and them would gradually weaken as he became habituated to their manners, till at last the partition would be entirely broken down, and he would find himself as capable as themselves of descending into any gross extreme. Thus, upon serious reflection, we see the pernicious consequences that will almost inevitably follow on a man's suffering himself to be drawn into bad company ; and the contagion he there receives extends its baleful influence to all other circumstances in life. It alienates his affections from those things, which constitute the most perfect of human happiness, it withdraws his heart from the enjoyment of real friends, and fixes it on those who, for a short time, may beguile and yield a kind of delusive satisfaction, only to plunge him into a sense of the deeper misery, when their society has lost its charms ; since even the pleasure he will receive there will only be transitory ; for though vice may delight for the moment, its attractions will soon lose their force, and will not long have the power of engaging his mind, without being attended with that keenness of anguish which always accompanies it ; it will cause him to reflect upon the contrast between pleasure bought at the expense of virtue, and that happiness, which might have been enjoyed consistent with it. Reason will serve him for little else than to upbraid him with the recollection of the past, and his intellectual system too much depraved and hardened by vice to incline him to employ her as his guide to extricate him from his involving ruin. Thus will all return to virtue be cut off, from his having lost the relish for it ; life to him will have lost all its enjoyments ; and he



will wander through its mazes, blinded and deluded by those passions, which wise men never suffer to gain the ascendancy.

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### THEATRICAL RECORDER.

#### No. XI.

Dec. 26. *Adelmorn, the Outlaw*—*Bunker Hill*.

Dec. 27. *The American Captive*—*Musick Mad*.

Having nothing to say of the preceding pieces, except that the two first were played for Mr. Morse's *benefit*, and the two last to the *loss* of the managers, we proceed to

Dec. 31. *Richard III.*—*Yes or No?*

Mr. COOKE having been expected to appear in *Richard*, on the 30th, the doors of the theatre were thronged at an early hour; but he not having arrived, the doors were not opened. Notice was given by the doorkeepers that there would be no performance till his arrival.

Preceding the play this evening Mr. Dickenson came forward, and in the name of Mr. Cooke made an apology for the disappointment on Monday, the purport of which was, that "owing to unforeseen circumstances it was out of his power to have reached the town—that having just arrived he was much fatigued;—but rather than occasion a second disappointment, he would exert himself to give satisfaction."

As this is not the first appearance of Mr. Cooke in Boston, it will not be expected that we describe his person, his voice, and other qualifications, which he possesses in common with all mankind. Nor will it, we presume be expected that we enter into a minute detail of all the excellencies of his personation of *Richard*. To notice every passage in which he exceeds all competitors in the character, would be as endless as it would be useless. He who cannot discover the superiority of his acting, even to the best of those who have preceded him on the American Stage, will not profit by any thing that we can write. If the indescribable expression of Mr. Cooke's features and gestures, *the language of emotions and passions*, reach not the understanding of the spectator, he must despair of being enlightened by a *language of words*.

It is a point conceded by all the criticks of England and America, that Mr. Cooke's *Richard* is superiour to that of any actor now in existence. Comparative criticism is therefore useless. To select passages in which he displays felicity of conception, maturity of judgement, and the power of speaking to the understanding "with most miraculous organ," would be no less a task than to copy the whole part. From a catalogue of superlative beauties, who can make a selection of a part without injury to the remainder?

Mr. Cooke's *Richard* is not always uniformly excellent, nor was it this evening superiour, or even equal, to that of the last season. He was evidently fatigued with his journey; and had a hoarseness, which sometimes rendered his utterance indistinct.

Taking as it was, excellent, but not in his best style, the scene with *Lady Anne* in the second act, and that with *Buckingham* in the third were the best parts of it. On these two scenes we had prepared some remarks, when accident threw into our hands *The Dramatick Censor*, published at Philadelphia, containing an elegant and elaborate analysis of Mr. Cooke's *Richard* as performed in that city. Struck with the justice of the criticism, and the propriety of its application in Boston, we copy from that work the editor's remarks on the scene with *Lady Anne*.

"In contemplating this extraordinary scene, the first thing that strikes us is the boldness and unblushing effrontery of Gloster, in daring, under such circumstances, to address or even to entertain a hope of winning her. Never sure was there a conjuncture of such difficulty propounded; and, after wondering how Gloster could so much as imagine it possible, we are at a loss to conceive by what practicable means he can hope to accomplish it. For the solution of this doubt we must, in the first instance, resort to Richard's opinion of lady Anne, and her character as he gradually develops it. That he is perfectly aware of all the difficulties that oppose him, we have from his own mouth:

Why love foreswore me in my mother's womb,  
And, that I should not deal in his soft laws,  
He did corrupt frail Nature with a bribe  
To shrink my arm up like a wither'd plant;  
To heap an envious mountain on my back,  
Where sits deformity to mock my body;  
To shape my legs of an unequal size;

To disproportion me in every part.  
 And am I then a thing to be belov'd ?  
 Oh monstrous thought ! more vain than my ambition.

His hardihood here therefore appears great ; but is swelled to absolute enormity when the time, the place, and the manner of addressing her are considered. He takes her at the funeral of king Henry, whom he had murdered, and at the very moment when she is pouring forth the most bitter execrations on the murderer. Nay more, he aggravates his offences by stopping the procession and compelling the bearers to lay down the corpse.

“ Gloster founds his hopes of success on two separate points—on his own abilities and hypocrisy, and the weakness and passions of lady Anne. The power of the former he knows and relies on ; the latter he knows and despises.

But I've a tongue shall wheedle with the devil.  
 Why, I can smile, and smile, and murder when I smile.  
 And cry content to that which grieves my heart,  
 And wet my cheek with artificial tears,  
 And suit my face to all occasions.

And when unseen by her, he hears her pour forth a string of curses not only on himself as a murderer of her husband, but on his wife if he have any :

Accursed the head that had the heart to do it ;  
 If ever he have a wife, let her be made  
 More miserable by the life of him  
 Than I now by Edward's death.

what can show his contempt for her heart and understanding more than this derisive, confident side-speech,

Poor girl ! what pains she takes to curse herself !

That his plan in outraging the funeral is evidently to increase her anger, in order that, by her violence, she may at once exhaust her rage and charges against him, appears from his side-speech :

First, *let her sorrows take some vent*—stand here !  
*I'll take her passion in its vain*, and turn this  
 Storm of grief into gentle drops of pity  
 For his repentant murderer.

Having, by a direct confession of his offences provoked her to exhaust her rage, he turns upon her with the whole artillery of his most artful flattery, and makes even the murder of her husband administer to the gratification of her vanity.

Your beauty was the cause of that effect ;  
 Your beauty ! that did haunt me in my sleep  
 To undertake the death of all the world,  
 So I might live one hour in that soft bosom.

Again

Fair creature, he that kill'd thy husband,  
 Did it to help thee to a better husband.

Again

Nay do not pause, for I did kill king Henry,  
 But 'twas thy wondrous beauty did provoke me:  
 Or now despatch—'twas I that stabb'd your husband—  
 But 'twas thy heavenly face that set me on.

This shameless avowal of his enormities, seasoned as they are with rank flattery on the score of her beauty, impresses her with an idea of his candour, and when he has thus soothed her, and in some measure dispelled his distrust of him, he cunningly urges his passion, and obtains an indirect compliance with his suit.

“ From the structure of this scene it is evident that it not only affords scope for, but imperiously demands, the most capital acting, and this it received from Mr. Cooke, the matchless significance of whose countenance gave full effect to every line he uttered, and made the whole an interesting and instructive commentary on female feebleness, and the danger of vanity to the female sex.

“ The parts of the scene in which the powers of this great actor appeared most prominent were, first, his injunction to the bearers of Henry's body to lay it down ;

Advance thy halbert—higher than my breast.

secondly, the sneering archness of his look and voice, when, on lady Anne having panegyricized the deceased king,

Oh ! he was gentle, loving, mild and virtuous ;  
 But he is in heaven, where thou canst never come ;

he replies,

Was I not kind to send him thither ?  
 He was much fitter for that place than earth.

The hypocritical pathos he threw into his voice and looks when he offers her his sword, and bids her hide it in his breast :

And let the *bonest* soul out that adores thee ;

and above all, the manner of his uttering the line

Why I can smile, and smile, and murder when I smile,

and the three lines that follow it ; which four lines were for the



first time introduced into the part by Mr. Cooke himself, from the the third part of Henry the Sixth. A judicious introduction, not only as they contain a forcible illustration of the character of Richard, but as they afford the actor a fine scope for exhibiting his powers. Never were words delivered with more perfect felicity, or greater effect, than these by Mr. Cooke, who, while uttering them, seemed to luxuriate with diabolical delight in the consciousness of possessing such terrible powers for the perpetration of mischief. On the whole, this scene was one tissue, nearly uniform, of transcendent excellence.

“The leading properties of Mr. Cooke as an actor are evidently these: a genius active and capacious, versatile and penetrating; a shrewd discernment; spirits lively and strong; animation which no exercise can exhaust; a judgement practised and correct; a luminous and exact discrimination, and a perfect, comprehensive knowledge of his business;—not the common *by-rote* knowledge of ordinary stage drudges, but the scientifick, profound knowledge of a philosophick actor. To give effect to these intellectual endowments, nature has bestowed upon him, besides an excellent voice, a stout, manly person, and features full of mind and expression, bold, strong, of matchless flexibility, fitted for the display of most passions; but chiefly for those of contempt, sarcasm, scorn and overbearing pride.”

Jan. 1. *Merchant of Venice*—No Song no Supper.

“Baker tells us, “The story of the Merchant of Venice is built on a real fact that happened in some part of Italy, with this difference indeed, that the intended cruelty was really on the side of the Christian, the Jew being the unhappy delinquent, who fell beneath his rigid and barbarous treatment.” This does not appear in the variorum edit. of Shakespeare, but if true, is a good exemplification of the fable of the lion and the painter—Had a Jew been the dramatist, it would have been otherwise. At present we have what perhaps nature never did exhibit, a being ‘*nullâ virtute redemptum*,’ a being redeemed by no one virtue. However potent the hand of the master, in this drawing, and however much it may flatter the prejudices of the ‘*fool multitude*,’ it shocks the philosopher, and cannot be entirely satisfactory to the critick. But taking the character as we find it, and looking for a representative of it, as it is, we discover more qualities in Mr. Cooke, for the just delineation of his

smooth usurious villany, and diabolical spirit of revenge, than concur in any other actor now living."

Thus far we have cited a London critick to our purpose. Though Richard is usually called the master-piece of Mr. Cooke, and probably is so generally; yet it is a doubt with us, whether, in his performances on the Boston boards, his *Shylock* has not exceeded it. It was by many thought superiour, during his first visit to this place; and on this evening such was the prevailing opinion of the judicious. In the scene with *Bassanio*, where he deliberated on the security of *Anthonio*; in the subsequent soliloquy where he expressed his hate to the merchant; again, when he offered to seal "a merry bond;" and again when he met *Solarina* and *Salanio*, and taxed them with a knowledge of his daughter's flight, he was peculiarly excellent. But all these passages sunk into comparative unimportance, when we beheld his masterly acting in the scene with *Tubal*, where the conflict of passions arising from the loss of his daughter and the prospect of revenge on *Anthonio*, almost overpowered his corporeal faculties.

In the trial in the fourth act, he was exceedingly great. Nothing that we can imagine, could surpass the by-play during the whole of this scene. In the speech of *Portia*, at the name of God, he bowed with the most profound reverence, acknowledging that mercy was

An attribute to God himself.

We can form no picture to our imagination that can equal the wonderful expression of his countenance, while *Portia* was saying

This bond doth give thee here no jot of blood, &c.

and when he asked the question that followed—

Is that the law?

Notwithstanding the horror and detestation that every one feels while viewing *Shylock* as the persecutor of *Anthonio*, there are two or three instances in which Mr. Cooke was strongly pathetick, and claimed a large share of sympathy. One was when he entered exclaiming,

You knew, none so well, none so well as you, of my daughter's flight—I say my daughter is my flesh and blood.

Another was at the close of the trial in the following speech—

Nay, take my life and all; pardon not that:

You take my house, when you do take the prop,

That doth sustain my house ; you take my life,  
 When you do take the means whereby I live.  
 and lastly this—

I pray you give me leave to go from hence ;  
 I am not well—

We close this hasty and imperfect review of Mr. Cooke's person-  
 ation of *Shylock* with the expression of our entire and unequivocal  
 approbation ; and a firm persuasion that

We ne'er shall look upon its like again.

### DEATH.

I heard the voice of woe ; I bade mine ear  
 Catch the low mournful murm'ring, passing sad.  
 It seem'd as tho' it issued from the grave  
 Of some poor wretch, inurn'd ere life had fled  
 Its lethargied abode—(the starting tear  
 Would scarce forbear to flow)—Yet sweet withal  
 Was it as those melodious notes I've heard,  
 Breath'd thro' the far-off flute most musical,  
 When his lone hours the nighted sea-boy cheer'd,  
 Waking the midnight echo on the wave.

“ King of the narrow dwelling ! shadowy lord !  
 Thy shaft unerring flies, thy trackless dart  
 Speeds sure, tho' silent, and thy viewless sword  
 Severs at once the knot of life ! Can aught  
 Avail thy destin'd victim ? aught avert  
 The fated blow ? No !—nor by riches bought,  
 By prayers relented, or by wily art  
 Won to delay thy stroke—nought *can* avail.

Oh dread implacable ! I flatter not,  
 Nor sue thee to be kind, or fondly wail,  
 In unavailing plaints, nor seek to buy  
 An hour's short respite—Respite ? said I, No !  
 With care and sorrow freighted all too slow  
 My ling'ring carrack rides ; by many a sigh  
 Wafted, and floated on by many a tear—  
 Urge thou its tardy course.—Oh not thy frown



Dark'ning, nor thy uplifted arm I fear.  
Strike—spectre monarch ! let thy shaft be hurl'd !  
Sharper are life's keen thorns.—I lay me down,  
Nor wish again to rise in this bad world."

A lengthen'd pause ensued—a trembling beam,  
Lent from a dying lamp, just shew'd me where,  
Prone on the earth, a female form was laid.  
Then feebly shot a last blue quiv'ring gleam.  
I look'd alas ! the victim of despair,  
Friendless and poor and woe begone—was dead.  
Sleep on and be at peace ! Short was thy day  
Of life and comfortless, poor hapless maid,  
When the long night is past, oh may a ray  
Of splendour light thee from thy bed,  
A flight of seraphim about thee play,  
And bind immortal glories round thy head !

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A PROBLEM.

To the question, "What are the reasons that women are more constant in friendship than men ?" the following answer might be given : The temperament of women is more cold, and therefore less likely to change or fly off from an object to which they are once attached. The same coolness of constitution renders them more subject to timidity ; and so they adhere to objects of affection, as being more fearful of losing what they value, and think cannot be restored. Shame and custom do not permit them to make the first advances toward friendship. Women likewise have not so much general acquaintance as men, or such freedom in seeking them ; which circumstance prevents them from changing the old ones.

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COURTIERS.

Courtiers behave to kings, with regard to their understandings, as gypsies do to their children ; which they cripple and disfigure, in order to render them fit objects of charity and to promote their trade of begging.